

*Bipartisan bill will help save lives and taxpayer dollars*

WEST PALM BEACH, FL., Representative Allen West (R-FL) spoke to local law enforcement leaders, educators and students today in Jupiter as he announced his co-sponsorship of the Safe Teen and Novice Uniform Protection (STANDUP) Act – H.R. 1515.

West announced his support of the STANDUP Act at a teen driving event at Jupiter High School, after taking part in a driving simulation showing the affects of texting and driving on a driver's coordination. Joined by teens, law enforcement professionals and victim family advocates, West expressed his concern for strengthening teen driving laws in Florida and across the country.

“As the father of two teenage daughters, I am personally concerned with the dangers of young people on the road,” West said. “The STANDUP Act will do exactly that- ‘Stand Up’ for our children, by taking a bold approach to strengthening the laws on teens and driving. I encourage my colleagues across both sides of the Congressional aisle to support the STANDUP Act.”

The STANDUP Act creates minimum Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) standards for all young drivers to protect them on America’s highways and roads. GDL programs allow young drivers to gain experience under supervised and less risky conditions, addressing several major facets of the teen driving problem.

Underscoring the benefit this legislation has for communities and families is a recent study conducted by the National Safety Council on the financial and human impact of such laws. The report indicates that if all states implemented comprehensive GDL laws, an estimated 2,000 lives could be saved. Further, if all 50 states were to enact these laws, it could generate savings of \$13.6 billion per year. In Florida alone, 181 lives and more than \$1.2 billion could be saved.

More than 50 Members of Congress from both political parties have signed on as co-sponsors of the STANDUP Act, further emphasizing the need to pass this bipartisan legislation. Elements of the bill have been included in the major federal highway funding legislation currently before Congress. Allstate Insurance Company has also been a supporter of this legislation and continues to work toward advancing the strongest national minimum GDL standards possible.

GDL laws allow novice and/or teen drivers to get on-the-road driving experience gradually, and under lower-risk conditions. GDL laws vary by state but the STANDUP Act has the following optimal provisions:

- Three-phase licensing process before full licensure that includes a learner’s permit issued no earlier than age 16, an intermediate stage, and full licensure at age 18;
- Ban on cell phone use and other mobile devices, including texting while driving;
- Nighttime driving restrictions; and,
- Restrictions on driving with teen passengers.

# # #